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COLONIAL MAYORS OF PHILADELPHIA.

HUMPHREY MORREY, FIRST MAYOR, 1691-1692.

BY JOSIAH GRANVILLE LEACH.

One of the interesting results growing out of the researches of Hon. Boies Penrose and Edward P. Allinson, Esq., incident to their "Philadelphia, 1681-1887: a History of Municipal Development," was the discovery of the charter, signed by "Thomas Lloyd, Deputy Governor of the Province of Pennsylvania, with the advice and assent of the Provincial Council at Philadelphia, the twentieth day of the Third Month, in the Third Year of the Reign of William and Mary, King and Queen of England *Anno Domini* one thousand six hundred ninety and one," by and under which a city government was first established for Philadelphia. Until this discovery there were known to exist but shadowy evidences of the establishment of such a government prior to the charter of 1701. Indeed, so shadowy were they that the latter instrument had come to be recognized as the first charter.<sup>1</sup>

The disclosure of the charter of 1691 has invested the name of the early colonist, Humphrey Morrey, with a greater degree of historical interest than before attached to it, since he is therein named and constituted the "present Mayor." He thus became "the first Mayor of Philadelphia," an honor before attached to the Honorable Edward Shippen, first mayor under the charter of 1701.

The date and place of Humphrey Morrey's birth have not been ascertained. The first known mention of him is in a letter from Robert Turner to William Penn, in which, under date of Philadelphia, August 3, 1685, Turner writes, "Humphrey Morrey, from New York, has built a large

<sup>1</sup> For a transcript of the charter of 1691, refer to page 504.—ED. PENNA. MAG.

Timber House, with Brick Chimnies," thus indicating that he had resided in New York and but recently come to Philadelphia.

Being a merchant, his removal was probably due to the fact that Philadelphia then afforded a better field for mercantile pursuits than New York, or, possibly, he was moved to make the change because of his Quaker predilections. That he brought with him a considerable estate and that happy accompaniment, a good reputation, and that he was forthwith assigned rank among the prominent men of the city, are indicated in events succeeding his arrival.

Some three months after the date of Turner's letter to Penn, Humphrey Morrey was appointed a justice of the peace, by virtue of which commission he became also one of the judges of the County Courts. This appointment is noted on the records of the Provincial Council, under date November 6, 1685. The minute reads,—

"Ordered a General Commission of the peace be Drawn for ye County of Philadelphia, and to put in these persons following, vizt.: James Claypoole,<sup>1</sup> William Frampton,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *James Claypoole*, the first named in the commission, became the President Judge of the Courts. On the organization of the Free Society of Traders in London, May 29, 1682, he was chosen treasurer, and retained the office until his death, August 6, 1687. He was commissioned an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, September 14, 1685, and November 18, 1686, was appointed Register-General of the Province, and during the year he died was chosen a member of the Provincial Council. He was one of the most noted of the early colonists. (See Claypoole Genealogy.)

<sup>2</sup> *William Frampton* was admitted a "freeman" in New York City, October 1, 1683, about which time he settled in Pennsylvania. He was a merchant and brewer. James Claypoole, in a letter dated at Philadelphia, Tenth month 2, 1683, writes, "Wm. Frampton is on the other side of me building a great brew house," and Robert Turner, in a letter of August 3, 1685, to Penn, writes, "William Frampton has built a good Brick-house, by his Brew house and Bake house, and let the other for an Ordinary." Frampton had business and property interests in Kent County, Delaware, and in 1685 was chosen one of the representatives of that county in the Provincial Council, in which office, as well as that of the justiceship, he was serving at his decease in 1686.

Humphrey Morrey, William Salway,<sup>1</sup> John Bevan,<sup>2</sup> Lacy Cock,<sup>3</sup> William War[d]ner, sen.,<sup>4</sup> Robert Turner<sup>5</sup> and John Moon.”

<sup>1</sup> *William Salway*, of Taunton, County Somerset, England, bought land in Pennsylvania, June 28, 1683, about which time he emigrated to the Province. He was in judicial office here from November 6, 1685, until his death, in 1695; presided over the County Courts during Governor Fletcher's administration; was appointed Associate Justice of the Supreme Court by Fletcher; served in the Assembly in 1687, 1690, 1692; was Clerk of Assembly, 1692-1694, and a member of the Provincial Council in 1693. He was one of the earliest manufacturers in Philadelphia.

<sup>2</sup> *John Bevan*, born in Wales, 1646; was well descended; came to Philadelphia in 1683; member of the Assembly in 1687, 1695, 1699, and 1700; returned to Wales with his wife and youngest daughter, Barbara, in 1704, and died there about 1722. He was a preacher of note in the Society of Friends.

<sup>3</sup> *Lacy (Lawrence) Cock* was a son of Peter Cock, a leading Swedish colonist, who had lived in the Province over fifty years, and had been a magistrate under the Swedes, Dutch, and English. Lawrence was a military captain and otherwise prominent in public affairs before Penn came. In 1680 he was a justice of the Upland Court, in which office he was continued by Markham. He was a member of Penn's first Council and of later Councils, and was in the Assembly many years.

<sup>4</sup> *William Wardner* was a large land-owner; deputy sheriff for "Upland and Dependencies," 1679; was commissioned a justice of the Upland Court, 1681; was continued in judicial office by Governor Markham, and sat in the first Provincial Council; and was a member of the Assembly from Philadelphia, 1682, 1683.

<sup>5</sup> *Robert Turner*, an Irish gentleman of fortune and one of the most eminent of the early colonists, was the intimate friend and confidential adviser of Penn. His name is in the list of "First Purchasers" from Penn, six thousand acres being credited to him. He was one of the "Twenty-four Proprietors" to whom the Duke of York released East Jersey, and in 1685 he was a member of both the Assembly and Governor's Council of West Jersey. In the previous year he was commissioned one of the first justices of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. In 1686 he entered the Provincial Council, and from February 9, 1688, till December 18, 1688, was one of the five commissioners who conducted the government of the Province, and for many years held the important position of Register-General. Turner's daughter, Martha, married Francis Rawle, the founder of the eminent family of that name in this city, and who, by the aforementioned charter of 1691, was constituted one of the six aldermen of the city.

For unknown reasons, the above gentlemen delayed to qualify until February 1, 1686, when they were "summoned by ye Sheriff to appear before ye Council to be attested, they not having yett satt by Virtue of this mentioned Commission." Responding, they accordingly appeared, and, with the exception of Robert Turner (who asked to be excused from serving, stating that "he would give his reason some other time"), were attested after the manner of their day.

One month later they held their first Court, the "Thirty Seventh" under Penn, and, singularly enough, one of the parties involved in the first case tried before them was their fellow-justice, John Moon. The subject-matter of this suit<sup>1</sup> indicates that the imperfections of human nature came to the surface then in as full degree as now.

The next known concerning Judge Morrey is as a petitioner to the Council. At its session of September 3, 1686, "The Petition of James Claypoole, John Goodson and Humphrey Morrey, was Read, complaining against ye Clark of ye County Court of Philadelphia, requesting he might be Dismissed of his Employment and ye David Lloyd might be placed therein. The Answer was, it shall be further considered off." "Ye Clark of ye County Court" was one Patrick Robinson, and, while the above-mentioned record does not specify the grounds of complaint against him, from the action of the Council on the 21st of the same month, when his case was "considered off," it is clear that he was charged with being uncivil and disrespectful in his official capacity towards the petitioners, in their office as magistrates. The minute reads, "Patrick Robinson was admitted upon his submission to remaine three months longer in his office of Clark, at which time he promises to resigne ye same, with the Records thereunto belonging, and with his owne hand endorsed ye same on his Comission, promising further in ye meantime to behave himself civilly and Respectfully to ye Magistrates and peaceably to all Persons, or for ye first

<sup>1</sup> "Pennsylvania Colonial Cases," by Hon. Samuel W. Pennypacker, LL.D.

offence committed in ye nature to have his Commission forthwith cancelled." If, when Robinson made the said promises, he intended to keep them, he soon changed his mind, for two weeks later he gave similar offence to the judges of the Supreme Court, and, on their complaint of his ill behavior, the Council peremptorily dismissed<sup>1</sup> him from office and commissioned David Lloyd, whose appointment Claypoole, Goodson, and Morrey had recommended.

In 1687, Morrey was elected to the Assembly, and again chosen in 1690. During the following year he became mayor, as previously stated, but the length of his official term has not been ascertained. The only known scrap of evidence relating to his mayoralty is contained in the proceedings of the Provincial Council of Sixth month 3, 1691, three months after the date of the charter; and for the preservation of this fragment we are indebted to the officials and citizens of Philadelphia who, in 1753, conducted a movement to secure the dedication of the Blue Anchor landing for public use forever, and caused a record of their action to be made in the Recorder's Office at Philadelphia.

The minutes of the Provincial Council for 1691 are lost, but in the record above mentioned is found the following extract from the minutes of August 3, 1691,—viz. :

“ Present, Thomas Lloyd, Deputy Governor and six Councillors. Humphrey Morrey, the present Mayor of the city of Philadelphia, on behalf of the said city moves the Governor and Council to lay out and regulate the landing place near the Blue Anchor. Whereupon it was ordered that the said Mayor and the Aldermen of Philadelphia have notice

<sup>1</sup> The decree of the Council did not long relegate Robinson to the shades of private life, for within a few months Register-General Markham made him his deputy, in which position he displaced Lloyd. On October 11, 1691, Robinson was commissioned Attorney-General by Penn, and April 26, 1693, he was called by Governor Fletcher, upon his super-seure of Penn in the government, to a seat in the Council, of which body he was shortly chosen clerk and secretary of the Province, retaining the same until 1701, when he was succeeded by the distinguished James Logan.

to attend the Governor and Council about the 8th hour in order to view the said landing.”

But little else is known of the existence of a city government under the charter. It is thought by many who have given the subject attention, that the charter did not continue long in force. Possibly, when it reached Penn, in England, he vetoed it, or, receiving his approbation, it was rejected by the Crown, or, as is suggested by Allinson and Penrose, in their work already alluded to, “it is possible that when Penn was deprived of his government, in 1692, and supplanted by Governor Fletcher, the charter may have been considered and treated as a nullity.”

By the provisions of the charter the mayor was to be chosen annually, and within three days of his election was required to make his attestation before the governor or his deputy for the time being “for his allegiance to the King and Queen, &c.” If elections had taken place, it is likely that some mention of the mayor’s “attestation” would have appeared in the records of the Council, such references being frequent in cases arising under the charter of 1701.

There is evidence,<sup>1</sup> however, that the charter continued in force, with Morrey as mayor, as late as December, 1692, and it may be presumed that the charter election had not been held, and that the mayor remained in office, as provided for in such contingency.

In 1692, Mayor Morrey bore a conspicuous part in that historical controversy respecting George Keith, Thomas Budd, William Bradford, and others, which shook the very foundations of the social, political, and religious world hereabout, and attracted attention throughout the American colonies and abroad. He was one of the judges who (August 24, 1692) caused the arrest of William Bradford, printer, and John MacComb, tavern-keeper, for “publishing, uttering and spreading a malicious and seditious paper,” and who, on the following day, at a “private session” of the court, framed the famous proclamation against

<sup>1</sup> Article by Judge Pennypacker in *PENNSYLVANIA MAGAZINE*, Vol. XV. p. 345.

“George Keith and his printed address,” and caused it to be read by the common crier in the market-place. And he was also one of the judges to whom was “transmitted the New England spirit of persecution, and who was found persecuting the true Christian-Quaker in tryal of Peter Boss, George Keith, Thomas Budd and William Bradford at the session held at Philadelphia the Ninth, Tenth and Twelfth Days of December, 1692.” (See “New England Spirit of Persecution,” etc., by George Keith. Printed by William Bradford, in 1693.)

When Governor Fletcher began his administration by virtue of his commission from the Crown, he offered to continue Morrey in his judicial office, but he “refused to be continued,” doubtless because of his attachment to Penn and lack of sympathy with Fletcher.

Two years later Morrey joined with Edward Shippen, Isaac Norris, William Carter, Thomas Wharton, and other leading citizens, in an important memorial to the Assembly, which set forth some of the chief grievances of the people of Philadelphia, and, in many cases, suggested the relief to be applied thereto. One feature of the memorial is particularly noteworthy. The petitioners pray that the persons put in office be men “of good repute and Christian conversation, without any respect to any profession or persuasion in religion,” thereby showing a spirit of religious toleration most commendable, but in marked contrast with the spirit manifested in the Keith-Budd-Bradford controversy.

Another and a higher political honor yet awaited Humphrey Morrey. It came to him on October 11, 1700, when, upon the invitation of Penn himself, he accepted a seat in the Council, in which noted body Morrey served during that and the following year. With this office he seems to have ended his public career, doing so, possibly, on account of his advancing years, or because of his retirement from an active business life in the city to his country-seat in Cheltenham Township. That he retired there, and there spent the closing years of his life in the cultivation of his lands, is infer-



able from his last will and testament, in which he described himself as "yeoman of Cheltenham township." Here was afforded him ample opportunity for sheep breeding, in which industry he had been earlier interested, as shown by the minutes of the Commissioners of Property, under date Sixth month 16, 1690, when "the Petition of Humphrey Morrey and James Fox for themselves and in behalf of others concerned in a flock of sheep in Philadelphia was read, Requesting a Convenient piece of land somewhere about the town for keeping them. Ordered that about Sixty acres be laid out in Squares between the Broad Street and so far towards Delaware as Conviently may be, so that it be near Dock Street and Walnut Street."

Mayor Morrey was possessed of large wealth. Immediately upon his arrival in Philadelphia he began the purchase of valuable pieces of real estate, on one of which he built his "large Timber House," and on another the warehouse in which he conducted his mercantile pursuits.

At one time he owned the greater portion of the block bounded by Front, Second, Chestnut, and Walnut Streets.<sup>1</sup> In the tax list of 1693 his estate was assessed at over six hundred pounds, there being then but six others whose estates were valued higher. He died February 2, 1715-16. His will bears date September 18, 1715, and was proved May 7, 1716. Most of his large estate he gave to his son Richard and his grandson Humphrey Morrey. Among his bequests are ten pounds each to the Monthly Meeting of Philadelphia, his brother Leonard, and his cousin John. His wife Ann (maiden name unknown) died in Philadelphia, October 15, 1693.

John, a son of Mayor Morrey, died September 10, 1698, having married Sarah, daughter of John and Rebecca Baynton Budd, and granddaughter of Thomas Budd, the Free Christian Quaker "persecuted" by John's father, as before mentioned. He was father of Humphrey, the grandson named in the will of Mayor Morrey.

His son Richard died between August 3, 1753, and

<sup>1</sup> PENNSYLVANIA MAGAZINE, Vol. XIV. p. 72.

January 30, 1754, since his will bears the former and was proved the latter date. In the will he is described as "gentleman," and by it he gave his entire estate to his wife Sarah, who, with his brother-in-law, John Beesley, was appointed to execute the same, with Dr. William Chancellor and Mr. Jenkins Jones as "overseers." His estate included a leasehold interest in London. He evidently left no issue surviving him, but had by a former wife, Ann, a son Thomas, who died in 1735. He married his second wife, Sarah, June 2, 1746 (records of Trinity Church, Oxford), daughter of Stephen and Sarah (Morgan) Beesley, and at the time of her marriage the widow of an Allen, having, it is said, previously married a Williams. Thomas Morrey, the son, was a man of estate and cultivation, and presumably, from a mention in his will, a convert to the Episcopal faith. He was a widower and childless at his death. In his will, dated September 8, 1735, and proved October 25 of the same year, he described himself as "of Cheltenham, gentleman," and gives to St. Thomas's Church, at Whitmarsh, fifty pounds towards building a "vestry-house;" to his father his books; to his "mother, Ann Morrey, all the rents, issue and profits of my house at Tower Hill, London, for her natural life, and after her decease to my father, and after his decease to my cousins, John Morrey's children, at the Meer, in Cheshire, in Old England;" to his "sister," Matilda Kimball, two hundred acres of land, part of four hundred acres at Neshaminy Creek, and to her children the other two hundred acres; to Mary Kimball (*alias* Hicks), three pounds; to the poor of Philadelphia, ten pounds; to Dr. Christopher Witt, a microscope; and to Mr. Howe, minister of Whitmarsh Church, two pounds to preach a funeral sermon from Micah vi. 6-9 inclusive.

The younger Humphrey Morrey, son of John and grandson of the mayor, was baptized (then an adult) December 18, 1709 (records of First Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia). He was a merchant and distiller, and by inheritance and acquisition became possessed of large wealth. A codicil to his will is dated August 6, 1735, and was proved

seven days later, showing that he must have died in the mean time. As there is no mention of wife or children, it is probable that he died unmarried and without issue. By his will, dated November 7, 1732, he bequeathed unto his "cousins," John Crapp, three hundred pounds and a negro called "Cipio;" Sarah Shippen, three hundred pounds; Jane Jones, one hundred and fifty pounds; Rebecca Crapp, one hundred and seventy pounds; Blathwait Jones, one hundred and fifty pounds; and John Jones and Susanna Jones, seventy-five pounds each. In the codicil it is stated that his cousins, John Crapp and Sarah Shippen, were deceased, and by it he gave to "the children of my cousin, Edward Shippen, to wit: Edward, Sarah and Joseph, £133 6sh. each, with all the share of the residue of my estate given to their mother;" to "Mary Crapp, the widow of John, £5;" to his aunt, Sarah Robinson, one hundred pounds, and added fifty pounds to the legacy of his cousin, Blathwait Jones. His "cousins," Edward Shippen and William Allen, Esquires, and William Paschall, are made his executors. The relationship to his "cousins" Edward Shippen and William Allen, Esquires, both of whom became mayors of Philadelphia, arose through the marriage of Edward Shippen to Sarah Plumley, whose mother (a Budd) was sister to the mother of Humphrey Morrey, and the marriage of William Allen's father to Mary Budd, another sister. It is interesting to note in this connection that the mother of Edward Shippen's wife became the second wife of the said Edward's father, Joseph Shippen.

From manuscripts among the Shippen papers in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania it would appear that the cousins, Humphrey Morrey and Edward Shippen, were at one time copartners in business.

Richard Morrey, the son, who died 1753-54, was the last descendant of the first mayor of Philadelphia who bore his name, and while his blood may continue to flow in the female line, no satisfactory data to that effect have been obtained by the writer.